

SF424 (R&R) & Electronic Submission

Research grant applications for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) will have to be submitted electronically through Grants.gov using the SF424 (R&R). December 1, 2005 will mark the beginning of a momentous change in the way NIH has traditionally received grant applications. One by one, all competing research grant programs (mechanisms) will transition from paper submission of the PHS 398 to electronic submission using the SF424 (R&R).

Why use the SF424 family of forms?

- SF424 consolidates forms currently used by Federal grant-making agencies.
 - Applicants can use standard forms regardless of the program or agency to which they are applying.
 - Reduces administrative burden on the Federal grants community.
- SF424 Research and Research-related (R&R) is the government-wide data set for research grant applications.

What is NIH's transition strategy?

- NIH will transition by individual research grant program/mechanism.
- NIH will announce plans to transition mechanisms in NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts.
- ALL applications in response to announcements for transitioned mechanisms will require electronic submission through Grants.gov on the SF424 family of forms.
- Mechanisms not yet transitioned will continue to require submission on PHS 398 on paper or through service providers.
- In general, Funding Opportunity Announcements will be posted in Grants.gov "Apply", at least two months before the initial submission date. During the transition period, every effort will be made to post as soon as possible without conflicting with paper submission dates.
- Transition timeline available at:
<http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt>

Where do I go for help?

Electronic Submission Website

For up-to-date information on electronic submission and the SF424 (R&R):

<http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt>

NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts

Transition plan announcements, Requests for Applications, and Program Announcements

<http://grants2.nih.gov/grants/guide/index.html>

Grants Info

For NIH funding opportunities, application guidelines, and grant-related resources:

Phone: 301-435-0714

TTY: 301-451-5936

Fax: 301-480-0525

Support hours: Mon.-Fri. 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. ET

Email: GrantsInfo@nih.gov

Grants.gov

For information about Grants.gov registration, PureEdge™ software and form navigation:

Online: <http://grants.gov>

Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726

Fax: 301-480-0525

Support hours: Mon.-Fri. 7 a.m.-9 p.m. ET

Email: support@grants.gov

eRA Commons

For information about eRA Commons registration, application validation, and post-submission functionality:

eRA Commons Online:

<https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/index.jsp>

eRA Online: <http://era.nih.gov>

Phone: 301-402-7469

Toll Free: 1-866-504-9552

TTY: 301-451-5939

Support hours: Mon.-Fri. 7 a.m.-8 p.m. ET

Email: commons@od.nih.gov

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NIH

Submitting Grants to NIH using the SF424 (R&R)

Paper no more,
Use 4-2-4^(R&R)

<http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt>



What is Grants.gov?

- A cross-agency initiative involving 26 grant-making agencies and over \$350 billion in annual awards.
- The Federal government's single, online portal for any person, business, or State, Local and Tribal government to electronically:
 - Find Grant Opportunities
 - Apply for Grants

What are the advantages of electronic applications?

- Standardized application format
- Improved data quality (e.g. automated business validations)
- Faster processing in Receipt and Referral
- Reviewers get applications faster, setting the stage for reducing time from receipt to award
- Grant image is clearer and in color
- Scanning, printing, and data entry costs will be reduced, saving taxpayers' money

Tips for success

- Register early! Visit the *NIH Preparing for Electronic Submission* website to learn how to prepare for the changes ahead.
<http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt/preparing.htm>
- The *NIH Forms and Applications* website has application guides and sample application packages for the SF424 (R&R). These cannot be used for actual submission, but they are a great resource to gain familiarity with the new processes.
<http://grants2.nih.gov/grants/forms.htm>
- Follow ALL instructions carefully.
- Be mindful of differences in terminology pointed out in the application guide.
 - E.g. Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) in Grants.gov = Signing Official (SO) in eRA Commons

SF424 (R&R) Components

- SF424 (R&R)—*referred to as cover component*
- RESEARCH & RELATED Project/Performance Site Location (s)
- RESEARCH & RELATED Other Project Information
- RESEARCH & RELATED Senior/Key Person Profile
- RESEARCH & RELATED BUDGET
- RESEARCH & RELATED Personal Data (NIH will not use)
- R&R SUBAWARD BUDGET ATTACHMENT(S) FORM
- SBIR/STTR Information

Agency-specific Components

NIH requires additional data collection to accommodate the unique information required for review of its biomedical research portfolio. Therefore, NIH has also developed the following agency-specific components (titled PHS398):

- PHS 398 Cover Letter File
- PSH 398 Cover Page Supplement (supplements the R&R Cover)
- PHS 398 Modular Budget
- PHS 398 Research Plan
- PHS 398 Checklist

Why call them PHS 398?

- A generic term was required since other HHS agencies will use these forms
- PHS 398 is the OMB-cleared data collection instrument that gives NIH the authority to request these additional data elements

Features of the SF424 (R&R)

- SF424 (R&R) data is arranged in components
- Not all components will be used for every Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)
- Agencies “construct” application packages for each FOA
- NIH will use several “standard” packages
- The FOA will indicate which components are required and which are optional
- Each FOA will have the appropriate application package attached
- A complete application to NIH will include a combination of (R&R) components & agency-specific (PHS 398) components
- The applicant **must** complete the application using the package attached to the particular FOA (*Information is drawn from the specific FOA and used in the forms*)
- Applicants cannot use any sample form packages or form packages from other announcements
- Application components include specific data fields as well as multiple attachments
- The applicant will complete data entry in all necessary components and upload appropriate attachments
- Most attachments are text
- NIH will require PDF for text attachments
- After submission, the eRA system will:
 - Generate a Table of Contents
 - Assemble the grant image
 - Include headers (PI name) & footers (page numbers) on all pages
- Applicants (*Project Director/Principal Investigator & Authorized Organizational Representative*) will review and verify this grant image in the eRA Commons